



FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
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IN REPLYING, ADDRESS THE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

REFER TO:

Tbc. Research Laboratory,
411 East 69th St., New York 21, N. Y.

April 10, 1950.

Dr. Joshua Lederberg,
Department of Genetics,
The University of Wisconsin,
College of Agriculture,
Madison 6, Wisconsin.

Dear Joshua:

Thanks for the strains, reprints, and information. I will be glad to test the prolineless mutant on our sample of hydroxyproline. Copies of our joint reprint, together with a few copies of the *Experientia* paper, are being sent to you under separate cover.

I had not been intending to publish the note which appeared in MGB, but will be glad to consider that you have sufficiently twisted my arm so that I am obligated to overcome my hesitation about flooding the market with short notes. I will try some time soon to write it up in slightly greater detail. I will be glad to omit the mention of lambda at your request but it does seem appropriate to mention the formal possibility, quite without this evidence, of a particle intermediate in size between a molecule and a cell. If you don't mind I would like to send this manuscript to you for comment before submitting it for publication.

Miss Cahn and I appreciate your offer to try to fit her in if a vacancy arises. I imagine you will hear from her as soon as the necessary documents are available. Meanwhile, the situation has shifted in that the veteran who threatened to displace her has been assigned elsewhere. We are therefore planning to keep her on for another year. I am sufficiently convinced, however, that she would be better off as a graduate student so that I would be glad to let her leave in the early fall if an opening should arise, even though we might have to scramble around a bit for a replacement.

Our EMB has been behaving satisfactorily. Thanks for the note on suggesting a source for a good product. Our fermentation experiments, originally designed to test the importance of segregation in connection with our studies on the phenomic lag, have led into some unexpected channels. Certain of your strains have proved to be completely unable to utilize the sugars for which they are fermentation negative, as they don't show traces of growth on these sugars as a carbon source.

Dr. Joshua Lederberg

April 10, 1950.

In other instances, however, the negative fermentation, as shown by absence of staining on EMB medium, is nevertheless accompanied by an ability to produce perfectly heavy, rapid growth on the same sugars. This has been observed with W-677 which grows well on galactose and arabinose, though we have confirmed your description of this mutant as being fermentation negative on these sugars. On mannitol it does not grow but it does give rise to reversions which then grow well on mannitol but without staining on EMB mannitol. I wonder if this is the sort of behavior that is referred to by Esther as a slow fermenter?

With best regards,

Sincerely,



Bernard D. Davis

BDD/h1

P.S. - Just got a letter from Guthrie telling me that he is looking for a laboratory job, but giving no reason for his resignation.